

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----128641 121428Z /43

O R 121314Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7387  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
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AMEMBASSY LILONGWE IMMEDIATE  
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AMEMBASSY MAPUTO  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0087

EXDIS

LILONGWE FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDEV RH US UK  
SUBJ: RHODESIA: NKOMO ON FURTHER STEPS

1. SUMMARY: AT NKOMO'S REQUEST CHARGE MET WITH HIM MORNING  
JANUARY 12. NKOMO ASKED ABOUT STATUS OF U.S.  
SUPPORT FOR ZAPU SCHOOL, SAID PATRIOTIC FRONT WANTED  
COMPLETE AUTHORITY DURING INTERIM PERIOD, BLAMED BRITISH FOR  
IMPEDING TALKS BETWEEN PF AND CARVER, AND SAID THAT, DESPITE  
PAST BRITISH PERFIDY, PF WAS STILL WILLING TO MEET WITH OWEN.  
END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER DISCUSSION OF U.S. ASSISTANCE FOR ZAPU SCHOOL (SEPTTEL),  
NKOMO ASKED ABOUT LORD CARVER'S DISCUSSIONS IN MOZAMBIQUE. CHARGE  
GOT AS FAR AS SAYING THAT DISCUSSIONS HAD GONE WELL AND HAD  
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INCLUDED DISCUSSION OF ADVISORY ROLE FOR ZIMBABWE NATIONALISTS  
DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD WHEN NKOMO INTERRUPTED. HE SAID  
THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF PATRIOTIC FRONT ACCEPTING AN ADVISORY  
ROLE. PF COULD NOT AGREE TO UK ASSUMING POWER DURING TRANSITION.  
TIME WAS LONG PAST FOR THIS. QUESTION NOW WAS HOW TO TURN OVER  
POWER TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DOING THE FIGHTING FOR THE LAST TEN  
YEARS. AS FOR MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE, THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THZM

IN ANY TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. THE FACT THAT THEY ARE AFRAID OF THOSE DOING THE FIGHTING IS TESTIMONY TO THEIR INSINCERITY IN THE STRUGGLE FOR TRUE INDEPENDENCE. CHARGE ASKED IF NKOMO WAS SAYING THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WAS DEMANDINGHCOMPLETE POWER DURING THE TRANSITION, AND HE SAID YES. CHARGE THEN SUGGESTED THAT, IF THIS WAS THE FIRM POSITION OF THE PF, THERE WAS LITTLE NEED OF FURTHER DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND THE PF SINCE THERE SEEMED TO BE NO ROOM FOR COMPGOMISE ON THE QUESTION OF TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. NKOMO IMMEDIATELY BACKED DOWN, SAYING THAT THE PF WOULD BE WILLINGHTO TALK WITH THE BRITISH EVEN IF HE PERSONALLY WAS DISGUSTED BY THE FUTILITY OF TALKS HELD OVER THE YEARS. CHARGE THEN ASKED WHEN NKOMO THOQGHT TALKS MIGHT BEGIN. HE SAID HE BELIEVED THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE SOMEWHERE AROUND THE DATES SUGGESTED BY OWEN IN HIS LAST COMMUNICATION.

3. CHARGE SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IN THE PF'S INTEREST TO HAVE CONTINUED THE DIALOGUE WITH LORD CARVER BACK IN SEPT-EMBER/OCTOBER RATHER THAN REFUSING FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. NKOMO BRISTLED, SAYING THAT IT WAS THE BRITISH WHO CALLED A HALT TO FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. THEY HAD CHANGED THE RULES FOR PROPOSED TALKS IN MALTA AFTER SMITH HAD REFUSED TO BE REPRESENTED. FURTHER, IT HAD BECOME CLEAR TO THE PF THAT THE BRITISH WERE NOT INTERESTED IN TALKING SUBSTANCE WHEN THEY INCLUDED IN THEIR LETTER OF INVITATION THE PHRASE "PREM CHAND MIGHT BE PRESENT" IN MALTA.

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4. CHARGE SAID EVEN IF THERE WERE GROUNDS FOR DISTRUSTING BRITISH, IT STILL STRUCK HIM PERSONALLY THAT THE FAILURE OF THE PF TO MEET WITH THE BRITISH HAD PERMITTED A SERIES OF DISTRACT-IONS TO CROP UP--SMITH'S INTERNAL TALKS, KAUNDA'S PROPOSAL FOR ELECTIONS AFTER INDEPENDENCE. THESE HAD LESSENNED MOMENTUM FOR PROPOSALS WHICH CONTAINED THE KEY ELEMENTS OF A ZIMBABWEAN ARMY BASED ON THE LIBERATION FORCES AND A COMMITMENT TO GET RID OF SMITH. MOST GRUDGINGLY, NKOMO ADMITTED THAT THERE WAS SOME SUBSTANCE TO THIS ARGUMENT.

5. IN A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON INTERNAL SETTLEMENT TALKS, NKOMO SAID THAT HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE HANGUP OVER WHITE REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT. IF HE WERE SMITH, HE WOULD NOT HOLD OUT FOR A BLOCKING THIRD. WHITE REPRESENTATION IS OF NO IMPORTANCE AS LONG AS WHITES CONTINUE TO CONTROL THE MILITARY AND DOMINATE THE ECONOMY, POLICE AND CIVIL SERVICE.

6. NKOMO ASSERTED THAT IN THE END THE ONLY WAY A TRUE TURN OVER OF POWER COULD BE ACHIEVED WAS THROUGH THE ARMED STRUGGLE. ASKED WHEN THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED GIVEN THE VAGARIES OF WAR, NKOMO SMILED AND INDICATED HE HAD NO PRECISE TIME FRAME IN MIND.

7. COMMENT: CONVERSATION WAS FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT, BUT AS NOTED  
ABOVE NKOMO WAS PRICKLY ON THE QUESTION OF TRANSITIONAL  
ARRANGEMENTS AND THE PERFIDY OF THE BRITISH. OUR READING IS  
THAT NKOMO MAY AGREE TO MEET OWEN BUT WILL TAKE EXTREME POSITIONS  
DURING ANY DISCUSSIONS HELD.  
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## Message Attributes

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